

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5142

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0896

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BY

SUBJECT: BURUNDI RECOGNITION OF ANGOLA'S MPLA

REF: BUJUMBURA 891

1. BURUNDI GOVERNMENT'S DECEMBER 25 ANNOUNCEMENT RECOGNIZING THE MPLA AS THE SOLE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA HAS BEEN GIVEN FULL PUBLICITY TREATMENT LOCALLY AS A MAJOR, EVEN HISTORICAL, DECISION. THE RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION IS COUCHED BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY BY GRB OFFICIALS SOLELY IN TERMS OF SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. THEY BRUSH ASIDE SOVIET AND CUBAN INTERVENTION AS MEANINGLESS IN THE FACE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S PRESENCE IN ANGOLA. DAILY FLASH INFOR EDITORIAL OF DECEMBER 26 ELABORATES ON THE THEME THAT SAVIMBI AND ROBERTO'S ASSOCIATION WITH "INHUMAN REGIMES OF APARTHEID" LEFT ONLY ONE "JUST CAUSE" TO SUPPORT IN ANGOLA, THE MPLA. THE EDITORIAL ALSO QUOTES EXTENSIVELY FROM A NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL SAYING THAT HAVING U.S. ON SAME SIDE AS SOUTH AFRICA RISKED ATTRACTING THE UNANIMOUS CENSURE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND ADVISING THAT U.S. SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO AID FNLA AND UNITA UNLESS AID WAS PART OF A MULTINATIONAL EFFORT INSPIRED BY AN APPRECIABLE NUMBER OF BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

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2. SOUTH AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN ANGOLA SITUATION CLEARLY GAVE STRONG PRO-MPLA FORCES KNOWN TO EXIST IN GRB CONVENIENT JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOGNITION DECISION ONCE PRESIDENT MICOMBERO'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO LIBREVILLE WAS OVER. WHILE BURUNDI WITH ITS OWN OPPRESSIVE MINORITY RULE AND HISTORY OF TORTURED ETHNIC CONFLICT IS HARDLY QUALIFIED TO THROW STONES AT SOUTH AFRICA, ITS NEED FOR ACCEPTANCE BY AND IDENTIFICATION WITH SO-CALLED PROGRESSIVE FORCES SEEMS TO CAUSE ITS OFFICIALS TO BE JUST THAT MUCH MORE EMOTIONAL AND VOCAL ON A KNOWN AFRICAN CAUSE -- THE FIGHT AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. THUS AS THE ARGUMENT BUILT UP IN THE BURUNDI ESTABLISHMENT THAT A TRULY "REVOLUTIONARY" GOVERNMENT (WHICH BURUNDI PRETENDS TO BE) HAD TO SIDE WITH THE MPLA AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA, PRESIDENT MICOMBERO WAS NEITHER WILLING NOR PERSONALLY INCLINED TO RESIST SUCH PRESSURE (SHORT OF SOME VERY DRASTIC AND HIGHLY VISIBLE CHANGE IN THE ANGOLAN SITUATION OR A VERY HARD ARM TWISTING BY PRESIDENT MOBUTU, NEITHER OF WHICH PROVED POSSIBLE).

3. DEC. 26 ANNOUNCEMENT DOES REITERATE BURUNDI'S SUPPORT FOR THE CONVOCAION OF A SUMMIT OF OAU CHIEFS OF STATE IN ORDER TO STUDY THE MEANS OF FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE ANGOLAN CRISIS. GRB OFFICIALS TOLD EMBOFF THAT THEY SAW ABSOLUTELY NO REASON WHY BURUNDI AS SOVEREIGN NATION SHOULD POSTPONE RECOGNITION OF MPLA UNTIL OAU SUMMIT DELIBERATION. ISOM

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